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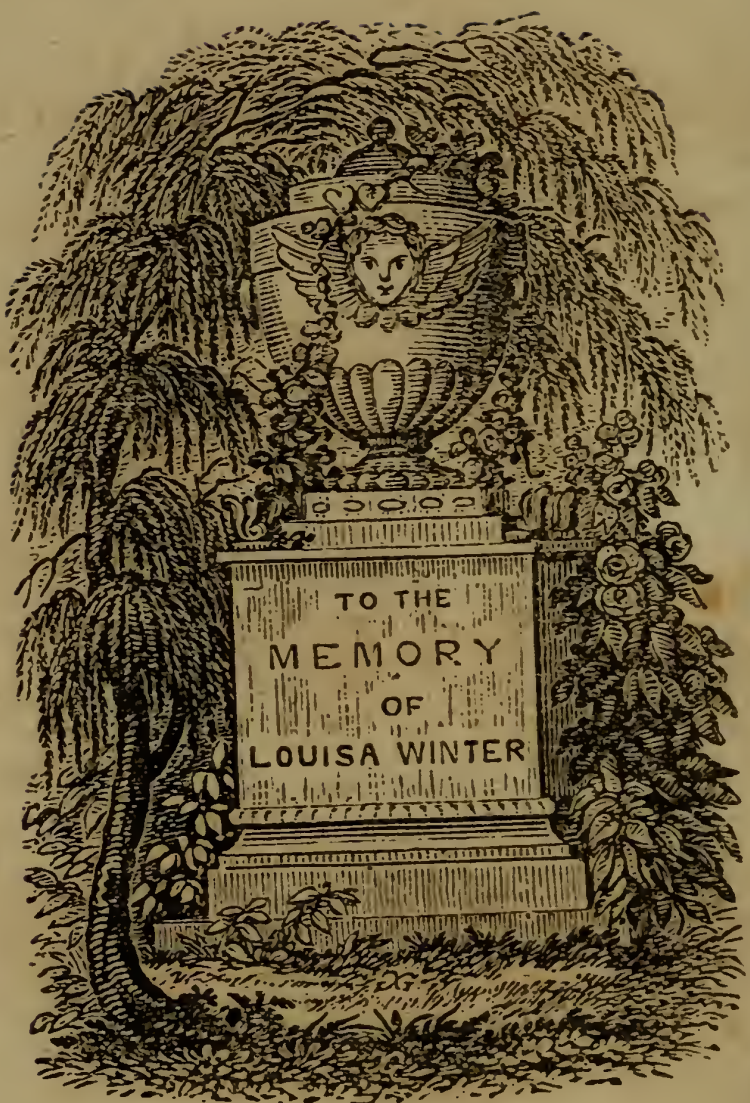
TO THE
MEMORY
OF
LOUISA WINTER

A MEMOIR

OF

LOUISA, Winter

ELDEST DAUGHTER OF T. WINTER,

PASTOR OF A BAPTIST CHURCH IN BRISTOL, ENGLAND;

WHO DIED, JUNE 3, 1829,

AGED NINE YEARS AND SEVEN MONTHS.

L. T. Winter

"Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

MATT. xix. 14.

REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL UNION

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PREFACE.

Although parental affection may have overlooked some of the defects in her character, it is hoped that this brief account of the submission of a dear child to the will of God, her patience in affliction, and her hope of future blessedness, through the merits of the divine Redeemer, are stated with Christian fidelity. The design of her bereaved parent is not to *praise the dead*, but to *benefit the living*.

To encourage parents to command their children and households after them, to keep the way of the Lord; and with more singleness of heart, and assiduous endeavours to obey the precept, "Train up a child in the way he should go,"—to stimulate Sabbath-school teachers to persevere

in their labours of love, being assured that in due time they shall reap if they faint not ;—and particularly to show children and young persons, that the religion of Christ can alone make them happy, both in life and in death ; and to assure them, that if they seek the Lord Jesus Christ in early life, they will find "his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace;"—this short but imperfect narrative is published ; accompanied by the fervent prayer of the writer, "that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace;" being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone ; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord."

MEMOIR

OF

LOUISA WINTER.

Louisa Winter was born October 25, 1819. Her parents received her as a gift from the Lord; and as soon as she uttered the infant cry, they committed her to the care of Him who took little children in his arms and blessed them.

Though she was a creature of God, "fearfully and wonderfully made," she was a *sinful* creature. This was soon visible in her bad tempers, and in her not always doing what her pa-

rents desired her to do. She was told, that if she was angry and passionate; if she was disobedient to her parents; if she was guilty of telling a falsehood; if she forgot the Lord, and neglected to pray to him and to praise him, the great God would be very angry with her; and that if she died under his anger, she would, with all wicked children, go down to hell, to dwell with wicked and miserable creatures, where she would have no mercy, but that she must be tormented for ever and ever. She soon knew that she was a sinner, and that sin is the abominable thing that a holy God hates; and when conscious that she had done that which was evil in the sight of God, she was

much distressed, and often terrified with fearful apprehensions.

Almost as soon as she could speak, she would kneel by the side of her mother, and repeat that beautiful little hymn composed by Dr. Ryland for one of Mr. Fuller's daughters, who died in the Lord before she was seven years old :—

"Lord, teach a little child to pray,
Thy grace betimes impart;
And grant thy Holy Spirit may
Renew my infant heart."

It would not satisfy Louisa merely to repeat a prayer that she had learned; she asked the Lord to teach her to pray. At one time she was distressed, not knowing whether she should pray to the Father, or to the Son, or to the Holy Spirit. But the heavenly

instructer soon taught her to pray to God, her heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, his dear Son; looking for the assistance of the Holy Spirit. And she was convinced she might pray, according as she felt her need, as the blind man did, when he cried, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me:" or, with the woman of Canaan, when she besought the Lord for an afflicted daughter, "Lord, help me:" or, with the first martyr Stephen, who died "calling upon God, saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." She would often desire to be left alone. When all had withdrawn she would sweetly and fervently, with an audible voice, pour out her soul in prayer to her Heavenly Fa-

ther. She has often been heard to pray that the Lord would create in her a new heart; give her true faith in Christ Jesus; wash her in his precious blood; clothe her in his perfect righteousness; give her patience under her affliction; and prepare her for his heavenly kingdom. In her prayers she did not forget her little brother and sister; and her dear parents and relations had a share also in her supplications at the throne of grace.

When asked on one occasion if she enjoyed prayer, she said, "O yes; I feel sometimes as though I was conversing with the Saviour, and I long to be with Christ." She often engaged in solemn prayer with

her brother and sister, and very earnestly exhorted them to pray for themselves. She assured them that nothing was prayer in the sight of God that did not come from the heart:

"That God abhors the sacrifice,
Where not the heart is found."

The concern she manifested for them, that they might be new creatures in Christ Jesus, was an evidence that she felt the value and blessedness of a personal interest in the Saviour. She would say that she thought she could not die happy if they were not converted. One day she entreated her mother to tell them about the Saviour, and to assure them that he is the Pearl of great price.

In her affliction she was remarkably fond of reading, and an attempt was more than once made, by her physician and parents, to prevent her from spending so much time over her books, lest it should injure her. But she would say, "I must read, I am sure it does not injure me." The Dairyman's Daughter, and several other interesting works, she read with much satisfaction and profit during her confinement to her sick room. She was much interested and entertained in reading through Bunyan's Pilgrims' Progress, and it was with deep interest and mingled emotions her father listened, one Saturday afternoon, to her remarks on some of the more

prominent parts of this book. O! how sweetly did she speak of Christian coming to the cross of Christ, and of his burden falling into the sepulchre of his risèn Lord; of the difficulties and enemies he had to encounter in his way to the celestial country; of the comfort he received from Hopeful in passing the river Death:—

> Of the kind angels at the gates
> Inviting him to come;
> Where Jesus, the forerunner, waits,
> To welcome travellers home.

From a child she knew the Holy Scriptures, which were able to make her wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus; and the Holy Bible was her daily companion: in it she meditated day and

night. This best of books she read, also, to her brother and sister. A short time before her death she read to them the one hundred and third Psalm with great solemnity, and then commended them in prayer to God, and to the word of his grace, who was able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. At the same time she exhorted them not to forget to read the Scriptures for themselves, especially not to neglect it at school.

Several portions of the Bible afforded her much consolation in her affliction. She was particularly delighted with the words of our blessed Lord, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for

of such is the kingdom of heaven :" "I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me." She was much taken up with that passage where our Lord said to Simon Peter, "Lovest thou me?" and with the exhortation Christ gave him, to feed his lambs; and with the kindness of Christ, who feedeth his flock like a shepherd, and gathereth the lambs with his arm, and carrieth them in his bosom. She spoke frequently of the wonderful love of God, who says, "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool:" and of the kind invitation of Jesus, "Come

unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

It was a mercy to our dear child, that she was favoured with an experimental acquaintance with the Saviour before her affliction. She had not then a religion to seek, but a religion to comfort her. The Lord was near her, and in him she found perfect peace. When asked how she felt with regard to a future state, she said, "I know that Christ is my rock. He is the way, the truth, and the life."

Although so frequently engaged in reading, in meditation, and in prayer, she was conscious that these duties are not in the least to be depended on for salvation. I inquired

one day very particularly, on what she rested her hope of salvation; and I had the gratification to receive this immediate answer, "Christ is my rock." She was again asked if she did not think her prayers would do something towards saving her. In reply she said, "I am fully convinced that I can be saved only through the blood of the Lamb, and my prayer is to be washed in that precious blood." That beautiful passage was cited, "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." The question was proposed, Which of these graces of the Holy Spirit would you rather have, my dear? in the full expectation she would have said, charity, or love.

But she said *Faith*, assigning as a reason why she preferred faith to hope or love, that without faith it was impossible to please God, or to be loved by Jesus Christ; but that she was sure, if she possessed faith, she should possess hope and love also; as they abide together. It is evident from this, that her views of faith in Christ were scriptural. She knew that it is "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

It was with painful anxiety that her parents and friends witnessed her sickness. From the commencement of her affliction, in December, she appears to have had the im-

pression that it would be unto death. Nor are we aware that she once, during her long sickness, expressed a desire to live. She more than once said, "There is nothing in this world but vanity and vexation of spirit; and if I am restored, I hope it will be to be useful in the cause of Christ, and that I shall be preserved from the sins and follies of this life." When the question was asked, Would you not like to live? She answered, "Just as it may please the Lord; not my will but his be done."

It affords me pleasure to record the opinion of a brother in the ministry, who kindly visited her in her affliction. He says,—

"With a melancholy pleasure I

recall the circumstances of my last visit to your dear departed child. I do not pretend to give the very expressions that passed during that interview, but merely to describe the state of her mind, and that by which it was produced. It was peaceful and serene, though she fully expected to die shortly. This tranquillity was not the result of a good opinion of herself. She had a deep sense of her unworthiness in the sight of God, and most clearly excluded all hope of salvation by her own merit. That which prevented despair was a conviction of the worth of the atoning sacrifice and justifying righteousness of Christ, together with the certainty she felt that he would not cast out

any poor sinner who shall come to him for salvation. He was 'all her salvation and all her desire;' she most ardently loved the Saviour, and desired to be entirely his, and to be disposed of agreeably to his good pleasure. Severe and protracted as had been her affliction, she murmured not,—nay, she was grateful for it; for she esteemed it far better than health, if attended with thoughtlessness. She was *willing* to live, that she might endeavour to lead souls to Jesus Christ, and spoke of the pleasure it would give her to become a Sunday-school teacher; but it was evident she *longed to depart*, to be with Christ. The chief attraction of heaven was

Jesus Christ, whom she loved, and whom she wished to serve without sin: she loved him because he had first loved her."

Her prospects were sometimes darkened, and her evidences of an interest in Christ obscured; and she was often afraid that her heart was not right in the sight of God; and instead of saying, "I do love Christ," it was, generally, "I hope I love him." Thus, although at one time she could say, "I know Christ is my rock," she was afraid at another time to say, "I know I love Christ."

One day she was exceedingly distressed with the fear that Christ would not be her refuge and her

hiding-place in the day of judgment, and she said, "O mother, I have been so distressed with a fear that Christ will say to me, 'Depart, thou cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:' and I was so pained for the moment that I could scarcely bear myself. Then I thought I could part with all for Christ, and that he would say to me, 'Come, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world;' and this gave me comfort." In this way God imparted strong consolation to her: and she was supported with the bright hopes of a blessed immortality.

She was filled with astonishment, that "God so loved the world, that

he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And she rejoiced in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich."

It was delightful to hear her speak of the loveliness of the Saviour. In her estimation he was "fairer than the children of men; yea, he was altogether lovely." In her illness she learned and repeated with much pleasure the following verses:—

'Tis Jesus speaks,—how sweet the sound!
I am the Rose of Sharon's ground:
Yes, Saviour, thou art Sharon's Rose,
Surpassing every flower that blows.

Thy comeliness and fragrant smell,
What mortal strains on earth can tell!
Here let me make a pleasing stay,
And pass my blissful hours away.

Thy peerless beauties shall employ
My heart, my tongue, my every joy;
The Rose of Sharon still shall be
My song throughout eternity.

Speaking of the bliss of heaven, she said, "There I shall be free from sorrow, and from pain, and from sin, and shall be constantly praising the Lord, in singing the song of Moses and of the Lamb." When asked if it would not afford her pleasure to see her parents in heaven, "Yes, (she replied,) but I shall be so much taken up in admiring the glories of the Saviour, that I shall

not think much about my parents then."

In her affliction, patience had its perfect work. In patience she possessed her soul. The peace of God, that passeth all understanding, sustained her heart and mind through Christ Jesus, under great bodily pain and weakness. When she feared she was impatient, she was grieved, for she knew it was sinful to be impatient, or to murmur and repine at the dealings of the Lord. Her mother said to her when she was in much pain, "How is it, my dear Louisa, you are so calm and composed in your affliction?"

"You do not know, mother, half I suffer; but when I am in pain I

pray to the Lord to give me patience, and I think of the great sufferings of the Saviour, and this enables me to bear it."

This verse of the poet was to her a source of comfort under her sufferings:—

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Saviour! hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
O, receive my soul at last!"

She always spoke of her affliction as a blessed affliction. "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good. My affliction is very light: I have not had one pain too many. I would not have been without this affliction for all the world." She

could say, with an eminent minister of Christ,*—

"Thus, in darkest dispensations
Does my gracious Lord appear,
With his richest consolations,
To re-animate and cheer:
Sweet affliction! sweet affliction!
Thus to bring my Saviour near."

The goodness of the Lord was very powerfully felt by her; she found him to be "a strong hold in the day of trouble." The sweet enjoyment of Christ's presence afforded her strong consolation, and a good hope through grace of the glory of God. When supported in the bed, and thought to be dying, she looked in the face of her weeping parents, and said, with a tone of voice that

* Rev. Samuel Pearce, whose life is published by the American Sunday-school Union.

will never be forgotten, "The Lord is very good to me."

Between ten and eleven o'clock in the night before she departed, she requested the friends in the room to leave it, saying, "Father will stay with me." When the door was shut, she desired him to pray with her. In prayer she was very devout, and appeared greatly to enjoy communion with God. She then said, "Father, read me a psalm." "What psalm, my love?" "Read the fifty-first, if you please." And then she expressed a hope that the Lord had created in her a new heart, and renewed a right spirit within her.

Soon after she spoke again of the Divine goodness; and about four

o'clock in the morning, June third, her happy spirit took its leave of earth without a struggle; and some kind angel conducted her, we trust, into the presence of her Saviour, "where there is fulness of joy, and to a seat at his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore."

There will she bathe her weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across her peaceful breast.
Millions of years her wondering eyes,
Will o'er his beauties rove,
And, endless ages, she'll adore
The blest Redeemer's love.

My dear children and young friends, I have not written the short account of this child to exalt her, but to show you what the grace of God did for her. Out of the mouth of

this child the Lord hath perfected praise. She hath "obtained redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

As it pleased the Lord to take Louisa away from this world in the tenth year of her age, you should remember that you are not too young to die. Many of you are quite as old as she was, and some of you are much older. A few months ago she was as likely to live as you are. You should not therefore suppose, because you are in health, that death is at a great distance from you, for it

may be near, much nearer than you think; therefore boast not of to-morrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth. "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

Louisa felt the importance of prayer, and of faith in Christ. You are not too young to pray, and to believe on the Son of God. Faith is the gift of God. If you ask him, in earnest prayer, to bestow this gift on you, he will graciously grant your request. You should not be satisfied with repeating a prayer you have learnt, but you should go into some private place, and with sincerity and earnestness ask the Lord to teach you to pray, and then you

should make known to him the desires of your heart. Let the command of the Divine Redeemer encourage you to do this: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

The great and good Shepherd took this little lamb into his fold, gathering her with his arm, and he kindly carried her in his bosom. This he did because he loved her. In return, she loved him more than she loved her parents, or her brother, or sister, or friends, dear as they were to her. You, also, should give Christ the chief place in your affec-

tions. He is worthy of your highest love. If you love him, you will serve him; and serving him, you will have your "fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

Louisa was happy in affliction, and she was not afraid to die. She could say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord shall take me up." She felt assured that it is far better to depart, and to be with Christ. If you seek the Saviour, and build upon him as your rock, he will guide you with his counsel through life, sustain and

comfort you with his Spirit in affliction and death, and bless you with an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom.

THE END.

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